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A L B A N I A

Apr. 12, 1954

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES/METHOD/SEXEMPTION 3828
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

INTERROGATION OF ZENEL SHEHU CONTINUES

Tirana, Albanian Home Service, Apr. 7, 1954, 2100 GMT--M

(Third day's) proceedings of Tirana trial--interrogation of Zenel Shehu)

(Text)

Voice--The third session is opened. The military Collegium of the High Court has received the following note from the Attorney General's Office: Because of sickness, we ask that the prosecution be presented by Comrade Arranit Cela, Prosecutor before the High Court." Messrs. Advocates, any objection to this note?

Voice--No.

Voice--Accused, any objection?

Accused--No objection.

Voice--The judicial body has decided that the prosecution will be presented by Comrade Arranit Cela.

Prosecutor--Accused Zenel Shehu, yesterday you told us that by radio you asked the American espionage service for weapons. We presented to you the list of arms and other materials that we found in your possession at the time of your arrest and of the arrest of the members of your group, Tahir Preci, (Nuri Plaka), (Zenun Golemi), Haxhi Gjyle, and Pal Nikoll Ndoj, of whom the last four were arrested at the moment of their landing. Also we presented to you a number of other materials, dropped to you by the American espionage service in the territory of the People's Republic of Albania, as asked by you by radio.

President--The materials in the hands of the judicial body are: 13 American type receiving and transmitting radio sets, 35 radio batteries, 17 flash-lights, 53 electric batteries, 8 field glasses, 16 signal flares, 34 German automatic weapons, 30 German rifles, 35 Parabel pistols, 20 hand grenades, 7,729 pieces of ammunition for German automatic weapons, 1,140 pieces of German ammunition for rifles, 89 German automatic clips, 12 pistol clips, 12 automatic clip sacks, 8 daggers, 38 parachutes, 4 parachute sacks, 4 jackets, 22 pairs of American-made trousers, 28 pieces of ... of American production, 6 American-made military coats, 24 pairs of woolen pants, 41 pieces of woolen flannels, 32 shirts, 9 raincoats, 17 knit ..., 32 pairs of shoes, 11 berets, 14 pairs of rubber boots, 3 jackets,

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one rain suit, 6 military belts, 6 quilts, 8 mattresses, 23 blankets, 1 (tin?) 17 (bags), 12 water canteens, 10 clothbags with rice, 10 clothbags with beans, 3 ... bags, a number of small loaves of bread, a bag of beans, sugar and rice mixed, 522 food tins, 3 medical kits, 10 packages of razor blades, 218 cigarette packets, 180 pieces of gold sterling, 90 pieces of half-gold sterling, 100 American dollars, a yellow note tablet with various information, and three letters with information and pictures. Accused, why did you receive these materials from the Americans?

Accused--These materials, arms, and ammunition were sent to me in accordance with my request in my last telegram from Albania and in conformity with the promise of the American intelligence service granted to me before my departure for (Albania). These materials were sent to me with the aim of equipping people who were displeased with the People's Regime, whom I was supposed to have had found in Albania, and thus use them at favorable moment for an armed uprising.

Q--To whom were you supposed to deliver these arms?

A--I was to deliver the arms and ammunition to the people whom I was supposed to have contacted, that is, people faithful to me.

Q--What were you supposed to do with these arms?

A--We had to hide them somewhere, and I had to tell the people to be ready for an armed uprising, so the Americans would find a pretext to enter Albania.

Q--What were you actually supposed to do with these arms? Against whom were you going to use them?

A--Against the people's regime.

Prosecutor--Allow me, Comrade President: Considering that an armed uprising is not an electrical switch, which only needs touching and off it goes, the accused should explain the preparations which are needed for carrying out an armed uprising. Therefore, the accused should tell what they were going to do before the uprising began.

A--We, through disatisfied elements, had to prepare various bases. After the establishment of these bases, I was going to distribute the arms to the elements whom I would have gathered. This was the first phase of my preparations. In the second phase--after I had established contacts with disastisfied elements, such as officers, employees, and people--I was going to inform the American intelligence service based in Athens. Concerning every action of mine, I was going to radio the American intelligence service in Athens. These were the (spearheads) according to the plan which I had in my pocket and which was found in my pocket on the occasion of my capture by the State security forces.

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President--Well, what concrete acts were you going to perform?

A--We were supposed to have the arms ready for the final phase which we were going to launch against the regime.

Q--But you said that you were going to distribute these arms to your faithful people.

A--Yes.

Q--Against whom were they going to use these arms?

A--We were going to use these arms against the people's regime. These arms would have served us for our activities, for an armed coup d'etat, for killing the men of Albanian People's Republic.

Prosecutor--Comrade President, can we believe what he says--that Zenel Shehu, Leader of the group, and together with him all his group, were going to commit terroristic acts in the People's Republic of Albania against men of the people's regime and the people's masses, can we believe it?

President--Let the accused answer.

A--I doubtlessly was going to use all the arms and means at my disposal against the People's Republic of Albania.

Q--Included in the material sent to you by the American intelligence service there is a considerable number of radio sets--13 radio sets. What did you want all these radio sets for?

A--We had to establish them in various parts of Albania in order to have constant and uninterrupted contact with the American intelligence service in Athens. The more radio centers we had the better for us, because in case one was discovered the others could continue to send information. Thus our service was safer.

Q--Among the radio sets, there are big ones operated by generators.

A--Yes, this is the safest among all the sets. It operates properly in bad as well as in good weather, and during the war.

Q--Who told you this?

A--These (instructions) were given to us in Athens by the American Colonel Johm.

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Prosecutor--Allow me, Comrade President: The accused said that radios operated by generators were to be used "during the war." What war is he talking about?

A--I mean for the armed uprising which we were going to carry out against the Albanian people's regime.

Prosecutor--Allow me, Comrade President: I want the accused to be questioned as to how many radio messages he had sent to the American intelligence before he was captured and as to what he had reported?

President--Accused, reply to the Prosecutor.

A--Yes, as far as I can remember, I must have sent the American intelligence service in Athens probably about seven, eight, or 10 messages. I do not recall the exact number of messages.

Q--What did you say in these messages?

A--In the first messages, I did not say anything except "we arrived," since we had not gotten in touch with the elements I had to contact. In some other messages I asked for food, pointing out that it was difficult to find food supplies because as yet I had not found loyal elements for contact.

Prosecutor--Comrade President, has the accused forwarded information as regards our Army, military strength in Albania, and so forth?

President--Accused, reply to the Prosecutor's question.

A--Yes, I have sent such information.

Prosecutor--Has the accused carried out propaganda against the people's regime? What kind of propaganda, and what was the meaning of this propaganda?

A--With the few elements I had here, I carried out propaganda in favor of Zog and the Americans, and against the people's regime.

President--Whom did you meet first?

A--After we left the Korce plain, we reached a village called Tetove: Outside Tetove we went to an old man, Rapush Mercani. There we stayed one night. This old man was a friend of Xheladin Tresova--I mean the old man Rapush. We spent one night in his house. This old man was dissatisfied with the people's regime. He gave us something to eat and drink--everything he had in his house. He was dissatisfied with the people's regime. He told that he was first with the Balli Kombetar and

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later entered Zog's party. He told us that he was from Southern Albania and was engaged in secret work with the Kosovars living in Fier and Lushnje. This is what I talked about with the old man. We asked him to guide us to (Lenie) Mountain in Korce. He replied: "I am an old man, but I will give you my son to guide you." Thus, on that night as soon as it was dark, he gave us his son, Qerim.

Prosecutor--Did he ask you from where you came?

A--He asked me.

Q--Did you tell him?

A--I told him that I came from Greece. I did not tell him that I came from Egypt and France. I told him only that I came from Greece.

Q--Did he ask you why you were armed?

A--Certainly he did. I told him for propaganda against the people's regime.

Q--To whom else did you talk?

A--After I reached Martanesh, I did not find any base. The only man I met from Martanesh was the husband of Gjyle's sister--Gjyle who accompanied me and had to stay with me. He did not agree to accompany us or allow us to establish a base there. When I reached Bulgize with the (few people I had with me) and saw that I could do nothing, I contacted members of my family. I certainly made propaganda with them against the people's regime.

Q--Accused, yesterday you told us that Zog had instructed you not to contact your family.

A--Yes, I said so.

Q--You betrayed your pledge.

A--Yes, I contacted my family after I could not find any opening anywhere. As I told you, my nearest relative did not accept me and threatened to kill me. Then, as my nearest friend and relative--whom I liked very much--did not accept me, I was forced to betray my pledge to Zog and to myself.

Q--Did you tell the people you contacted about your mission?

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Q--Did you tell them why you had come?

A--Yes, I told them in general I had come on business, and that this regime had only a short while to live.

Q--What kind of business was it? Did you tell them about it?

A--I did not tell them in detail.

Q--But in general you did?

A--I told them generalities.

Q--What did you tell them? Tell us concretely what you told them.

A--Concretely, I told them

Q--What?

A--I said, "The people are dissatisfied with the present people's regime. I have come for the purpose of preparing to undermine the people's regime. The Americans will thus come to Albania shortly. The people love Zog because they know him."

Q--Did you tell them who had sent you?

A--Yes, I told them.

Q--Tell us how you told them.

A--I told them that I came in behalf of Zog. Zog sent me here through the mediation of the Americans. The Americans sent me to Albania.

Q--In what way did you tell them?

A--"Zog sent me to the Americans, and the Americans sent me to Albania. This is true because I am in contact with the Americans."

Q--Did any one advise you to surrender?

A--Yes. At my first meeting with my relatives, all told me, "It is wise to give yourself up because there is no other way," and in the end they told me, "You may also go back because here you can have no ground for your activities."

Q--What answer did you give them?

A--I did not accept their advice.

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Q--That means that you continued your work?

A--Yes.

Q--According to the program of the American espionage service?

A--Yes.

Q--Accused, why did you not fulfill your task?

A--I could not achieve my task because I was caught by the State security forces.

Q--How did they present the situation in Albania to you? I mean those who sent you here.

A--The Americans and Zog presented the situation in Albania as completely different from what I found it to be.

Prosecutor--How?

A--Zog as well as the Americans told me: "The first contact you will have with a person you can trust you will find free activity and will be satisfied--a garden with flowers." Well, I found a situation contrary to that. My friends also found the same situation.

Q--Did you, did you find such people?

A--I did not find a single one. - *very emphatic answer!*

Q--Did you go to your family? How did they receive you? Tell us about it once more.

A--My family and my people received me with complete dissatisfaction.

Q--What kind of activity did you engage in during your stay outside the country?

A--During my stay outside the country I always served Zog.

Q--Tell us concretely about these activities?

A--I carried out agitation and propaganda for the sake of Zog and against the other parties. No doubt about it.

Q--In which organization did you participate?

A--I participated in the Legaliteti organization.

Q--What is this organization?

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A--This organization is, so to speak, prepared to furnish diversionists to the American or British espionage agencies to send them to Albania. This is a group of agents feeding the American or British espionage with every means at its disposal.

Q--Who leads this organization? Who is that criminal?

A--It is led by Abbas Kupi.

Q--Who are its members?

A--It includes Abbas Kupi, Salim Domani, Gago Goga, and others whose names I do not remember. These are the leaders.

Q--Who pays for it?

A--This party or this group, so to speak in the service of the Americans, is financed, as was told me by Abbas Kupi in Cairo, by the Americans and the British.

Q--Are there such other criminal groups outside the country?

A--Yes, there are: The Legaliteti group, the Balli Kombetar group, and the Independent group.

Q--Any other name?

A--And the Agrarian or Peasant Party.

Q--Is there any Free Albania Committee? Have you heard about it? Do you know anything about it?

A--Yes. There is the committee, later named Free Albania Committee," including elements of Balli Kombetar and of the Legaliteti.

Q--What is this committee?

A--This is a committee which is accredited to the Americans and British in order to give them groups and people--as many as they want--to send them to Albania. This committee is backed and organized by the Americans and British against Albania. It includes Hasan Dosti, chairman; Abbas Kupi, Zef Pali, and Said Kryeziu, members. The Free Albania Committee organized an espionage course--of course aided by the Americans and British--in Western Germany, in Munich. Thus, after they are prepared and ready, they are continually sent to the People's Republic of Albania. Albanian elements who are sent to this course are called upon by the Anglo-Americans through the committee.

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Q--Who are in the Free Albania Committee? Who are these people? What they are is known. You have told us their names, but what kind of people? What was Abbas Kupi?

A--In Albania Abbas Kupi was the chairman of the Legaliteti organization, collaborating with the Italian and German Fascists. He was for them against the Albanian people as well as against the present people's regime.

Q--What has he done against the people's regime? What do you know about it?

A--He fought, he fought against, I mean, by favoring them.

Q--With whom did he fight?

A--With the occupiers.

Q--With the occupiers?

A--Yes.

Q--Where is he now?

A--He went to other occupiers--the imperialists. They want to bring back the imperialist government, according to Anglo-American wishes. Money and finances are given by them for this purpose--to undermine the present people's regime in Albania.

President--Accused, tell us about the relations existing between the different exiles--war criminals--abroad.

A--They were not in a agreement with each other. They did their utmost to unite, but Zog did not want them to unite. In spite of that, the committee ... (hesitates--Ed.) the group of the committees reached a union between the different parties in order to attain its goal, but all of them are not sincere with each other.

Q--Why could they not unite?

A--Because, as the saying goes, to "divide and rule" is Zog's principle--wanting to divide them all and then unite them later under his rule. But he could not attain this aim. Zog wanted to put in the Free Albania Committee all his faithful elements, those of the Legaliteti. But he could not attain this aim because the leader of the committee was at that time Mithad Frasherri, and Abbas Kupi, Zef Pali, Said Kryeziu, and Mico Kota were only members.

Q--Accused, tell us some more of the activities of Zog with the war criminals.

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A--Zog has always tried to maintain his contact with the war criminals and to unite them. He was doing this--approaching all people, even his enemies--in order to unite them and to undermine in due time the people's regime.

Q--Can you tell us about his concrete relations, and with whom he had them?

A--Yes. With Mustafa Kruja, Ali Kelcyra, his former enemies from long ago. Zog made peace with them, complete peace.

Q--How is it possible? Yesterday they were his enemies and today he makes peace with them? Why did he make peace with them?

A--He made peace with them to undermine the People's Republic of Albania.

Q--Why then were they his enemies yesterday?

A--Because then they wanted to hold their seats, and Zog removed them from their positions.

Q--What is he doing now?

A--Now there is no other way for them but to unite, to form a bloc in order to destroy the people's regime.

Q--Tell us about Zog's attitude during this period of exile?

A--During this period, Zog did his utmost to make himself known to the Anglo-Americans, first by the British, and later to the Americans, in order to be recognized as a leader and then to form a government in order to use it against the People's Republic of Albania; in other words, to hold the first seat and have the best salary.

Q--Where did he want to form this government?

A--He wanted to form this government in exile. For example, when we were in England, he tried to form a government through British authorities, and later he tried with the Americans. He could never fulfill his desire.

President--What other relations did Zog have with the people of the American and British imperialist intelligence?

A--As far as I know, Mr. Chairman, when we were in England, he had contacts, as I told you, with a former Minister of Albania, (Royan), and with Col. Hill.

Q--What kind of people are they? What mission had they received from American imperialism... (President corrects himself--Ed.) from British ... (leaves sentence unfinished--Ed.)

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A--(Royan) was a former Minister to Albania. He was a third party between the British Foreign Office and Zog. But, this Hill was with the British intelligence service. Since we arrived ... (interrupted by President--Ed.)

President--Yes?

A--He, Zog, had continual contacts with Col. Sterling, who was in Albania before the war.

Prosecutor--What had he done in Albania before the war?

A--He pretended to be an organizer of the Albanian gendarmerie. In reality he was a spy, organizing spying centers in Albania. Lately, he was the chief of the intelligence service in Syria who chased him from the country. Later on he came to Egypt. When he came to Egypt he had continual talks with Zog. Recently, Egypt also chased him from the country.

Q--What were Zog's relations with these people, I mean with (Royan), Hill, and with another general in England?

Q--With another general, chief of the intelligence service in the Middle East. I do not know his name.

Q--What were these relations? What was the character of these relations?

A--These relations were in connection with the organization of an armed uprising to undermine the present regime in Albania.

President--What do you know about other activities of Zog?

A--Besides these activities, he carried out trading in Egypt and England,

Q--What trade?

A--He was engaged in the cotton trade, and also gold smuggling--buying it cheap and selling it at high prices.

Q--Was this trade free (in Egypt and England)?

A--It was entirely forbidden on the occasion. I even told him that it is not fair to carry out gold smuggling.

Q--What did Zog tell you?

A--He told me that Farouk had allowed him to do this in Egypt.

Q--Why had Farouk allowed him?

A--Because they were partners in the business, so to speak.

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Q--Did Zog trade with other people in Egypt?

A--Yes, with some pashas whose names I do not know.

Q--What kind of trade were they doing?

A--The cotton trade, and, as I told you, the gold trade.

Announcer--This is the end of the interrogation of the accused Zenel Shehu.

Prosecutor--Accused Halil Branica, do you accept the indictment?

A--Yes.

W--What you got to say? What have you done?

A--I have read it and have accepted it.

Q--What have you done?

A--I come here as a spy against the State.

Q--When did you leave Albania?

A--I left Albania on Apr. 6, 1939.

Q--Why did you leave Albania in 1939?

A--When the Fascist power occupied Albania, I received an order to go with Zog's family in the direction of Greece. I went to Greece.

Q--What was your duty as an officer that time?

A--My duty was to obey orders.

Q--What orders were they?

A--I received the order to go with Zog's family, and I went.

Q--Where did you have to go?

A--To Greece.

Q--Why to Greece?

A--To accompany Zog's family.

Q--What was it that forced you to go to Greece?

A--Orders.

Q--What order?

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A--The order of my commander.

Q--Whom were you then serving as an officer?

A--That time, as an officer, I was serving the Fatherland.

Q--Who was your fatherland then, Zog or the people of Albania?

A--No, no, the Fatherland, and my conscience.

Q--What?

A--My conscience.

Q--Your conscience? Then, accused, why did you not protect your conscience?

A--That is right. As I was an officer I obeyed the order, and I went.

Prosecutor--Allow me, Comrade President. The accused Zenel Shehu confessed the same thing yesterday. The accused refer to orders so as to hide a black mark which they had put on themselves, together with their leader Ahmet Zogolli. Accused Halil Branica, it is a fact that Ahmet Zog betrayed the Albanian people. He did (shouting--Ed.) the same thing not only on Apr. 7, 1939, but he betrayed the Albanian people. From the day he began sitting in the Tirana Ministries. He has done very much. (shouting--Ed.) There were other officers who betrayed the Albanian people in 1939. Halil Branica!

A--Yes.

Q--There were other officers who did not obey the order of the traitor but took their arms and fought, there in the ports of Durres, Vlore, and Sarande. There are also people like Mulo Ulqinaku, (more shouting--Ed.) who gave their blood for the people and not for Zog. Zog betrayed the Fatherland, and together with Zog the accused also betrayed the Fatherland.

President--When did you come to Albania?

A--I came to Albania on Aug. 4, 1952.

Q--Who sent you into Albania?

A--I was sent to Albania by Zog through the mediation of the Americans, (correcting himself--Ed.) the Americans through the mediation of Zog.

Q--When did you enter the American espionage service?

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A--I entered the American espionage service after the return of Zog from the United States about November. He called upon us and told us: "I want to send two persons to Albania, you and Zenel."

Q--When did Zog go to America?

A--Zog went to the United States in September 1951.

Q--Why did he go there? What do you know about it?

A--He told us that he wanted to buy a house in America and to settle in America. When he returned it was clear that this was not his intention, but that it was for political reasons. The fact is that he sent us to Albania.

Q--Who was the mediator in sending you to Albania?

A--Zog was our mediator. He told us: "I will send you to Albania. Tomorrow an American will come to talk with me about your trip to Albania. You will go to Albania to find out about the political and economic situation of the Albanian people in Albania. If it is possible, you must create bases in Albania." The next day, in fact, an American did arrive. He say Zog for about one hour, and when he came out of the audience he was accompanied by Hysein Selmani. I asked Hysein Selmani: "Who is he?" He told me: "He is an American, a (fried of ours)."

Q--Did Zog tell you anything else in connection with your departure for Albania?

A--The afternoon of the day in March when we were to leave for Albania, he called upon Zenel Shehu and me, in the presence of Hysein Selmani, and told us: You will go to Albania. Your mission to Albania is very secret. I have arranged your trip. My delegates and your leader is Hysein Selmani. He will present you to the Americans. ... and you will spread the news that you are going to America to administer my property in America." Thus, I, Zenel Shehu, Hysein Selmani, with two sisters of Zog and Haxhi Gjyli, left in March (correcting himself--Ed.) ... in February for Paris. Hysein Selmani was charged with presenting us to the Americans. We reached Paris about Mar. 9, stayed in the Lutecia Hotel, and on Mar. 11 an American came to our hotel. He wanted to speak with Hysein Selmani. This American was called Mr. Field, a tall man of middle age and with gray hair. A few moments later Hysein Selmani arrived at the Lutecia Hotel and presented us to him--the man charged with arranging our trip to Germany. On Mar. 14 he came again in the morning with two cars. We entered the cars and left for Germany.

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Q--From there where did you go?

A--In Germany, near the French-German border, we stopped in a forest and they gave us military uniforms. . . . from there, they took us to Munich. In Munich they sent us ... (Prosecutor interrupts--Ed.)

Q--Why did they give you military uniforms?

A--Pardon?

Q--Why did they give you military uniforms?

A--They gave us military uniforms in order to pretend that we were soldiers, not civilians.

Q--Did they tell you anything when they gave you military uniforms?

A--No, they did not tell us anything.

Q--Did you have documents when you crossed the border?

A--No. We did not need documents (because it was American territory).

Q--You crossed the French-German border?

Yes, but there, too, it was the Americans who were the masters. We needed no documents.

Q--Nobody asked you anything?

A--No. Nobody interrogated us or talked to us.

Q--Right. Did they give any names to you?

A--Yes, they gave us false names.

Q--What was your false name?

A--Zenel was called "Frederic" and I "Williams." (laughter in the court; President rings the bell for order--Ed.)

Q--What name?

A--Williams.

Q--To whom did they give another name?

A--To Zenel, Haxhi Gjyli, and Hysein Selmani.

Q--Right. Where did you go from there?

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A--Then we traveled in Germany. Nobody asked us anything. We went to Munich. There we were lodged in a secret house--especially for agents--under the American administration. It was about 20 kilometers from Munich. We stayed about 6 or 7 days.

Q--What did you do in the house?

A--We only ate and drank--nothing else.

Q--Did you see anyone else in that camp?

A--No.

Q--Who came regularly?

A--This Mr. Field came again. Mr. Field was the chief of intelligence agents in Germany. After 7 days Mr. Field came again in the uniform of a colonel. He was dressed as an officer that day and took us to the Munich Airport. He took us there and put us in a plane--an American four-engine bomber. He told us: "Now you will go to Greece. There you will find other people waiting for you." We took off from Munich and arrived in Athens ... (corrects himself--Ed.) Piraeus.

Q--Did anybody accompany you in that plane?

A--No. Only the pilot.

Q--Only the pilot?

A--Yes.

Q--Did they give you any documents?

A--No.

Q--They did not give you any documents?

A--No.

Q--Right. Proceed.

A--After we arrived there and the plane landed, a jeep approached the plane. Two people came from the jeep and asked us to come out of the plane.

Q--What were their names?

A--One was called Jim and the other Charles.

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Q--What were they?

A--What?

Q--What were they?

A--They were Americans.

Q--What?

A--Of the American espionage service.

Q--What?

A--Two Americans of the American intelligence service.

Q--Where were you, in Washington or in Athens?

A--In Athens.

Q--In Piraeus.

A--Yes, in Piraeus.

Q--In the Athens Airport?

A--Yes.

Q--When you landed, did you not see any Greek guards coming to see the plane?

A--Pardon?

Q--When a plane lands in an airport guards generally come to control it.

A--No, no.

Q--Then you are right ... (accused interrupts the Prosecutor, who stops speaking--Ed.)

A--Nobody came out.

Q--Nobody came out?

A--No.

Q--Accused, how do you explain (that there were no Greeks at the airport, only Americans?)

(Accused tries to answer but Prosecutor proceeds--Ed.)

Q--How do you explain it?

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A--I explain it according to my knowledge. Greece was a part of the American territory.

Q--Who was with you in Athens?

A--Zenel, Haxhi Gjyli, and Hysein Selmani--our leader until then.

Q--Right. Who took you in charge at the airport?

A--At the Athens Airport two Americans called Jim and Charles, of the intelligence service, took us in charge. They took us to a house, a secret house. The house was run by the Americans.

Q--Who was doing the talking with these Americans?

A--We were speaking with them.

Q--Do you know any foreign language?

A--Yes, I do: French and English.

Q--What do you know?

A--English, French, and Turkish.

Q--All right, proceed.

A--Zenel knows, too.

Q--Proceed. Where did they send you?

A--They sent us to a secret house run by the Americans. The next day the two Americans came again and took our biographies. They took our pictures, two of each of us. (pause--Ed.) We asked them: "What are these pictures for? They said: "We shall send them to the center. We shall send your biographies, too."

Q--Did they not tell you the reason for taking your biographies and pictures?

A--No, they did not. They said: "We want your biographies for our center."

Prosecutor--Comrade Chairman, this is the description of a document (in the possession of the accused when they were arrested) which also was (read to the accused) by the agents of American intelligence. In Greece, they completed the formalities on Zenel Shehu and Halil Branica, (the declared spies of the American espionage service.)

A--Yes,

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President--What else?

A-----

Q--Did they ask you for other documents beside those?

A--No.

Q--Besides the biographies and pictures?

A--No, they did not ask for anything else.

Q--Did you give them your biography?

A--Yes, we did.

Q--Complete?

A--Complete.

Q--What did you say in your biography?

A--In my biography, I wrote my name, surname, date of birth, and

Q--What profession did you give at that moment? (Prosecutor raises his voice--Ed.)

A--In the document, our profession was given as agent. (laughter in court--Ed.)

Q--What did you do in that house?

A--The chief of the American intelligence came out to that house the next day. He saw us and told us: "You will stay in this house and you will attend the lessons they will give you. You will be able to go out." He used to come there often. During our stay in the house, we did (what he told us).

Q--What?

A--After a few days in that house, they brought us radioman Tahir Preci, because we needed a radioman with us. Also we told him about Hamit Matjani. Matjani had advanced knowledge about our trip to Greece from Irfan Ohri, because Zog had sent Irfan Ohri to Greece. They brought Hamit Matjani. With Hamit came a certain Zheldin ... (accused hesitates--Ed.) Tresova. After they came we started our training. Also we went outside to learn signals for the planes to drop goods. We went outside for walks and to test our arms, the arms which we had to take with us.

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Prosecutor--What were you trained for?

A--We were given exercise in walking because we had to walk over the mountains.

Q--What was the aim of the other lessons, such as map reading and compass training?

A--We were taught the use of a compass for orientation ... not to lose direction.

Q--Tell us what you needed them for, what they had told you?

A--We ourselves asked for maps and compasses.

Q--Not that, not that. Tell us why these lessons were taught you.

A--We were taught this in order to know how signal the airplanes.

Q--Who conducted these lessons?

A--The lessons were conducted by two Americans whose names were (George) and (Jim).

Q--Fair enough that compass training was given to you so that you wouldn't be lost in Albania. But what was the aim of the training in handling arms?

A--Because we had to take them with us.

Q--Tell us why you were given range practice?

A--The range practice, Mr. Prosecutor, was given us in order to test arms for proper operation because we were not coming here as friends but as enemies.

Q--We know that you were coming as enemies ... but what were you going to do with these arms?

A--We had the arms for protection in case of clashes *to see them*.

Prosecutor--The Accused is (afraid) to say ... you had to shoot, you had to kill, if it was possible. Halil Branica, as well as Zenel Shehu, are afraid to say openly that the arms which were given to them--preparatory to the armed uprising--by the American intelligence service were to be used for shooting the sons of the people here.

President--What did you do after you finished the training course?

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A--After we were through with the course and 5 days before our departure, the chief of the intelligence service came to us and told us that we had to leave on Apr. 27, and that we had to go in the direction of Castoria (Greek territory--Ed.) and enter into Albania.

Q--Tell us whether it was you or the American intelligence service who decided the means of travel you would use for coming into Albania. Was it by air or by foot?

A--It was we who decided as to what kind of travel we were going to use.

Q--You decided to come by walking. When did you leave Greece?

A--On Apr. 27, the Americans came and told us that we had to leave for Albania. So we were equipped with all arms and food and then a jeep took us to Pireaus Airfield. There we were put in a airplane and left for Castoria. We were accompanied by two Americans, whose names were (John) and (Charlie). There we were received by a Greek officer who had been given orders for that purpose.

They took us in another jeep and we went to a village. I do not know its name. We spent the night there. That night we met two other Albanians who had come there. They were with the Greeks. Their names were Hysein Kapllani and (Hise Neli). We took them with us because they knew the way better than Hamit. After we spent the night there we left together, accompanied by a Greek officer and about seven or eight Greek soldiers, by truck for the (Grammos) Mountains where we spent the night. The next morning we descended toward (Matis). I had been ill since I was in Germany, and my illness became worse. Thus, when we reached the Grammos area I could not continue on my way and I spoke with Zenel, telling him: "I cannot go farther, therefore I must turn back. If I become better, and in case you want me, I will keep my promise and will come." So, together with a Greek officer and some Greek soldiers I returned to (Castoria)--a Greek center only in name, but in reality an American center. The Greek officers of the center were only in charge of accompanying the Albanian diversionists to the border.

Q--Accused, you said that when you reached (Castoria) you were handed over to a Greek officer and some soldiers.

A--Yes.

Q--Did the Greek officer know about your arrival?

A--Mr. President, as I told you, he was informed.

Q--(Who) was informed of your arrival?

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A--These officers, these Greek officers, who took us were always in contact with the Americans. These Greek officers had only the task of accompanying the Albanian diversionists to the border.

Q--But the Greek soldiers, did they know too?

A--The Greek soldiers (interrupted by President--Ed.)

Q--Did they know too?

A--Certainly, they knew. At (Castoria) they informed the American intelligence service center that one (of our group) had returned. ... then, some Greek soldiers accompanied me to Athens and left me at the Carlton Hotel. At the Carlton Hotel an American of the espionage center was awaiting me. He obtained a room for me at the hotel and told me to stay there. I stayed about 15 days in that hotel. The 16th day, (John) came and told me: "We do not have news from Zenel, and if we do not receive any until Monday then we shall send you to Egypt, because we do not keep people around doing nothing." Since they did not receive news from Zenel, they sent me to Western Germany by an American four-engine bomber. I left Greece for Germany. I arrived in Germany at Frankfurt. There, I was received by another American called (Jack). He placed me in a hotel where I stayed for 2 or 3 days. After 3 days the same American came and told me: "You have to go back to Athens."

Q--Proceed.

A--He changed my name--my first name only--and my nationality. I was supposed to be a Turk from Macedonia. He put me in a Swedish plane heading for Greece, where I was met by an American called Jim, who took me to a hotel. He said: "We have contacted Zenel," and said that Zenel's work was going well. I stayed there a few days. Then, we received news from here that "Halil is wanted in Albania." On Aug. 4, 1952, they put me on a plane at 0700 hours.

Q--Before you tell us about your departure, tell us about your activities abroad?

A--During my stay abroad?

Q--During the period you stayed abroad. (President raises voice--Ed.)

A--During my stay abroad?

Q--Yes, during your period abroad. What did you do?

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A--During my stay abroad I did not do much. I was always with Zog.

Q--Were you a member of any group?

A--In reality, I was not a member of any group, but I was in favor of the Legaliteti group because it was Zog's party.

Q--With whom did you stay?

A--Zog

Q--What was Zog's group?

A--Zog participated in the Legaliteti group.

Q--Then, were you not a member of that group?

A--Yes, I was a member of that group.

Q--What do you know about Zog's relations during this period? What are Zog's relations with the intelligence services of the Americans, British, and of others?

A--When he was in England he collaborated with the British.

Q--With whom?

A--With a former British Minister to Albania . . . and with Col. Hill. They were of the intelligence service. When we went to Egypt, he had relations with a certain Col. Sterling. He was of the American espionage (accused corrects himself--Ed.) of the British espionage in the Middle East. He lived in Syria. He had correspondence with him, and he used to come often to see Zog.

Q--Why did he keep these relations? What were these relations?

A--Espionage relations.

Q--What were Zog's relations with the war criminals?

A--Zog had relations with war criminals too. He used to favor one, look with disfavor on another, and so on. He used to maintain some of them--for example, Mustafa Kruja, Ali Kelcyra, and others--former enemies of Zog. They used to come to Zog's house.

Q--Why did he keep these relations? Do you know anything about it?

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A--Yes, he kept these relations in order to disorganize the Legaliteti party. (accused corrects himself--Ed.) the Balli Kombetar party.

Q--Why did Zog keep these relations?

A--For that reason.

Q--Why? What was Zog's intention?

A--To put one against the other.

Q--What was Zog's intention? Was it to drive one against the other?

A--Yes, to disorganize them in order to prevent them from uniting themselves.

Q--But why?

A--In order to be the leader himself.

Q--Why?

A--In order to become the only leader of these criminals.

Q--Why did he do that?

A--For this reason.

Q--Why?

A--In order to be the only leader.

Q--What would have been his gain in being the leader of these criminals?

A--He would have gained recognition from the Americans.

Q--What kind of sympathy could he get from the Americans? Would he gain a profit in name only?

A--No, not only in name, but he would get everything that the Legaliteti party gets ... (accused corrects himself--Ed.) the Free Albania organization.

Q--What kind of profit?

A--He would receive the dollars given to that organization.

Q--Were you his officer?

A--Yes.

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Q--His personal officer?

A--Yes.

Q--What were Zog's relations in Egypt with other people?

A--In Egypt, political relations?

Q--What kind of relations did he have?

A--In Egypt he had relations with Pashas, for example, Siraj Al-Din Pasha, the Minister of the Interior in Egypt.

Q--What kind of relations?

A--He had close relations with him, because they made an agreement on cotton trade. Also Siraj Al-Din Pasha, Ali Maher Pasha, and the former King of Yugoslavia, Peter, were in on the agreement. These three made this agreement on cotton trade between Egypt and the United States. ... when we were there, they were making preparations for their business.

Q--Was it allowed to carry out trade in Egypt?

A--Since he was Minister of Interior, it was allowed.

Q--When did you leave for Albania?

A--I left for Albania on Aug. 4, 1952.

Q--From where?

A--From Athens.

Q--By what means?

A--By plane, an American (three)-engine bomber.

Q--Who was with you?

A--Three pilots.

Q--(Were you supposed to travel by plane?)

A--Yes.

Q--When?

A--As I told you, when I arrived from Germany I was supposed to go to Albania because Zenel had asked for me, saying: "Halil must come here." ... This is what I have done.

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Q--Who was in the Plane?

A--The pilots were in the plane, the American pilots. In reality they were not Americans, because they spoke another language. I could not understand their language, nobody else. There were five or six people called from here by the chief. They gave me a letter of instructions for my group chief, Zenel, along with the passwords, my passwords, which would allow me to contact Zenel.

Q--When did you land in Albania?

A--I landed in Albanian territory on Aug. 4, 1952.

Q--Who gave you that letter?

A--An American called John.

Q--What were the contents of the letter? Did you read it?

A--Yes, I read it.

Q--What were the contents?

A--The letter said: "Send us three friends."

Q--Yes?

✓ A--"How many people of the security police have you convinced in our cause?"
(laughter in the court--Ed.)

Q--What else?

A--Nothing else.

Q--What else? What else did it contain?

A--I do not remember anything else.

Q--What did the Americans want be sending these letters?

A--They wanted three persons in Athens in order to keep them in the American service to train them for other purposes--if necessary to send them back to Albania.

@--When did you come to Albania? What date?

A--On Aug. 4, 1952.

Q--When did they arrest you?

A--What?

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Q--When did they arrest you?

A--(The same day) I was arrested. I landed, I gave my password. I gave my password when I went to (Berat.) The password to contact Zenel was "burrel." I greeted them, I shook hands with them, and at that moment I was arrested. I (said: "What is this?") (Laughter in court--Ed) The security? (Laughter in court; bell is rung to restore order--Ed.)

Q--It is true, comrade judges, that the accused Halil Branica was caught the moment he landed in the territory of the People's Republic of Albania. For this, praise to the State security forces, faithful to the Party and people! Praise to our people who together with these security forces (applause makes sentence unintelligible--Ed.).

Q--What materials did you have with you?

A--Military equipment and weapons.

Q--Weapons. What kind of weapons?

A--A long rifle.

Q--Why?

A--As I told you previously, I had the rifle because I was coming here as an enemy and not as a friend.

Q--What documents did you have in your possession when you were arrested?

A--A letter.

Q--Is this the letter?

A--Yes.

Q--Did you have any identity card? *Leder Njiftin*

A--Yes, I had.

Q--What kind of identity card?

A--An identity card with the name of Ahmet Jusuf.

Q--Who gave it to you?

A--The American intelligence service.

Q--Why did it give you a false name?

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A--In order to hide my identity if I should present myself anywhere in Albania. (laughter in court--Ed.)

Q--Advocate, have you anything to say?

Advocate--Nothing.

Q--Does the accused have anything to say?

A--(No answer--Ed.)

Q--Accused, do you accept the indictment?

A--Yes.

Q--Of what you did?

A--Yes.

Q--Sit down.

President--the judicial session is closed. The next session will take place tomorrow at 0900 hours.

Announcer--You heard a recorded proceedings of the spy trial against a group of spies and diversionists of the American imperialist espionage service.

B R I E F S

PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY MEETING--The Presidium of the People's Assembly has decided to convene the seventh regular session of the People's Assembly on Apr. 13, 1954, at 1600 hours. (Tirana, Home, Apr. 9, 1954, 1900 GMT--M)

BATO KARAFILI has been appointed Albanian Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. (Tirana, Home, Apr. 10, 1954, 1900 GMT--M)